

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**SMCLO Presents Powerful Production of Edward Albee's  
"WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?"  
Performed by Samohi Theatre!**

SMMUSD/Santa Monica High School Theatre in association with The Santa Monica Civic Light Opera presents a powerful staging of Edward Albee's ***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?***, which features four of the best performers from Santa Monica High School's Theatre Arts Program. After last month's epic production of ***The Music Man***, director Frank Ford keeps the 04/05 season alive with Albee's searing drama about an embittered professor and his domineering wife who turn an evening of no-holds-barred drinking into a wicked game. The two stage an all-night battle of mind games and sexual intrigue for an unsuspecting young colleague and his wife, whose own relationship is tested.

Edward Albee's ***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*** plays May 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 and 28 — **for 6 shows only!** — in the Humanities Center Theater, Samohi's intimate staging space on the second floor of the school's English building.

"To ask a professional actor to do one of the four roles in this play is to challenge them to reach the highest levels of their art," said Dr. Frank X. Ford, SMCLO's Artistic Director and director of the show. "To ask high school actors to do this play is to ask them to go miles beyond anything they or anyone else thought they could do. They're doing it... brilliantly!"

***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*** previews Thursday, May 19 at 7 p.m. and opens Friday, May 20 at 8 p.m. Additional performances are Thursday, May 26 at 7 p.m., Friday, May 27 at 8 p.m. and Saturday, May 21 and 28 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15, general admission (\$10 for the preview).

Brett Fisher, SMCLO producer and managing director, (normally seen on the podium of all SMHS and SMCLO musicals) oversees the entire production operation and serves as the show's producer. "It's exciting to see him [Ford] challenge his students like this," said Fisher, a Samohi alum. "For those coming to come see all of our shows this season, they are experiencing an exhilarating ride that exposes young actors to all the challenges and experiences this Program is geared to provide."

The cast of ***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*** includes Alex Nicolaou (a senior who has been involved in seven prior productions with Samohi Theatre since 2001) as "George." Alex is a diverse performer who's prior credits have included "Dick" in *Play It Again, Sam*, "George" in *Goodbye Charlie*, and "Lloyd" in *Noises Off*. Playing opposite "George" is Rose Bloomfield (last seen playing the "Dream girl" in *Play It Again, Sam* and on television, in Disney Channel's "Movie Surfers") as "Martha." Anthony Alvarez (an up-and-coming junior who was last seen playing

Marcelus in *The Music Man* and previously as Bogart in *Play It Again, Sam*) plays the role of “Nick.” Playing opposite “Nick” is Stevie Evans in the role of “Honey.” Stevie was previously seen playing “Linda” and “Dream girl” in *Play It Again, Sam*, and “Brooke” in *Noises Off*.

The SMCLO/SAMOHl season also features a bonus production of selected **One-Act comedies of David Ives**, playing June 2, 3 and 4, in the Humanities Center Theater. All tickets to all shows are \$10.

Tickets for all remaining 04/05 season productions — including Group Discounts — are available by phone through the SMCLO production office at 310-458-5939, or on the web at [www.smclo.org](http://www.smclo.org).

The Santa Monica Civic Light Opera, a sponsored educational activity of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District, serves as a partner to SAMOHl’s Theatre Arts Program, enhancing the student experience through mentoring by alumni and theatre professionals and developing productions for the Humanities Center and Barnum Hall stages.

This past February, SMCLO received two coveted NAACP awards for Best Lighting and Best Sets, out of eight nominations for their acclaimed production last summer of “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” SMCLO joins the elite ranks of the Geffen Playhouse, the Theatre at Boston Court, Troika Entertainment, and the Mark Taper Forum/Center Theatre Group, whose productions were also nominated.

SAMOHl is proud of its illustrious alumni, including actors Glenn Ford, Gene Nelson, Oscar-winner Gloria Stuart, Oscar-winner Sean Penn, Oscar-nominee Robert Downey, Jr., Rob Lowe, Charlie Sheen, Emilio Estevez, Holly Robinson, Dean Cain, Ryan D. Hurst, Wallace Smith, Tessa Thompson, Matt Walker, Keith Coogan, John Augustine, Amber Tamblyn, and Colleen Ford; and writers/producers Meredith Stiehm, and Zack Estrin, among many others.

***My Fair Lady***, the grandest of the Lerner and Loewe musicals, gives the season its spectacular grand finale — a marvelous summer SMCLO production featuring talented alumni, working professionals, and accomplished high school students. ***My Fair Lady*** runs July 14, 15, 16, 17, 22 and 23. Tickets are \$20-30, (\$15 for the preview on 7/14.)

The SMCLO gratefully acknowledges Samohi and SMMUSD staff members: Dr. Ilene Straus, *Chief Educational Officer/Principal*, Catherine Baxter, *Dean of the Performing Arts Department*, and Dr. John Deasy, *Superintendent of the SMMUSD* for the generous and continuous support of the SMCLO and Santa Monica High School Theatre Arts Program.

The SMCLO is also grateful for the support of many community partners, most notably presenting season sponsor **Washington Mutual**, and season sponsors **Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel**, and **Gramercy Partners, Inc.**, the publishers of ***Santa Monica Magazine*** and ***Santa Monica Business***, and our newest sponsor, the ***Santa Monica Daily Press***.

For additional information about the Santa Monica Civic Light Opera and the Samohi Theatre

Arts Program, contact Brett Fisher, Producer and Managing Director, at 310-458-5939.

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## Quotes from the cast —

### **SMCLO Presents Powerful Production of Edward Albee's "WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?" Performed by Samohi Theatre!**

#### **Anthony Alvarez, a 17-year-old junior, who plays NICK:**

##### ***On his character Nick***

"He kind of acts as the Greek chorus, in that he realizes the games George and Martha play, and gets to sort of explain it to the audience."

##### ***On rehearsals so far***

"I know we're working *really* hard, and I think it's really going to pay off."

#### **Rose Bloomfield, an 18-year-old senior who plays MARTHA:**

##### ***On her character Martha***

"She's disturbing. Sometimes more disturbing than the audience is comfortable with. But in some ways she is just another woman who has been extremely spoiled. Over the years growing up in academia, she's been overdone with mond games. What's at her core is that she's someone who's at a loss. What's at her core is that she's someone who's at a loss. She constantly gets what she wants, but she's looking for what she needs, which is basically to be stopped."

##### ***On performing 'Virginia Wolf' at the high school level***

"The show will have a different feel to it than the typical performances. It won't have the same kind of stale energy that it might have with an adult show, and we'll more than likely come out with an edgier performance. It is a challenge, we're not denying that, but we're attempting to bring a fresh perspective to the material."

##### ***On the play***

"It's funny, contagious, disturbing, edgy, raw, and such a challenge to work on."

#### **Stevie Evans, an 18-year-old senior who plays HONEY:**

##### ***On Performing Live***

"When the audience is at the edge of their seats, and they don't know what is going to happen next, and you can surprise them with a twist — that's my favorite part of acting."

***On a high school group performing this work***

“We bring fresh ideas. We’re willing to go as far as we need to go. This isn’t a job for us, it’s a learning process, so we’re willing to go with it.”

**Alex Nicolaou, an 18-year-old senior who plays GEORGE:**

***On Preparing for this role***

“I started out by watching the movie. When you listen to it being performed you tune in to the various lines. You make discovery after discovery. I hear something different each time I read it. I can say it has become my absolute favorite play. I think it’s one of the best works of literature and philosophy ever written.”

***On George beyond his intellectual side***

“I do find it incredibly enriching to explore the character. George is very articulate. His lines are powerful, almost poetic at times. He rises up all throughout the play, challenging people with mind games.”

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